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<b>Notice of Allowability</b>	<b>Application No.</b>	<b>Applicant(s)</b>	
	10/690,650	SAHARA, HIROSHI	
	<b>Examiner</b>	<b>Art Unit</b>	
	Susan S. Lee	2852	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--  
All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to amendment filed 9/13/05.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 4,5 and 7-17.
3. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
  - a) ☒ All    b) ☐ Some\*    c) ☐ None    of the:
    1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
    2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
    3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* Certified copies not received: \_\_\_\_\_.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.  
**THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.**

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
  - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
    - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

**Attachment(s)**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  | 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)            |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                | 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413),<br>Paper No./Mail Date _____. |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),<br>Paper No./Mail Date _____ | 7. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment                    |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit<br>of Biological Material          | 8. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance   |
|   | 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____.   |

### EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

The application has been amended as follows:

As to claim 13, lines 3-4, change "the image bearing means" to - - an image bearing means - - because there is no previous recitation of an image bearing means.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The primary reason for allowance of claim 4 is the inclusion of a sheet transport guide means that is located such that in a downstream side of a transfer means, an upward curve protruding upwardly from a tangential line to a nip portion of the transfer means is formed; and in an upstream side of the fixing means, a downward curve downwardly protruding from the tangential line to the nip portion of the fixing means is formed; the transfer means is an intermediate transfer member with a transfer roller in contact with the intermediate transfer member; and the sheet transport speed in the fixing means is set lower than the a sheet transport speed in the transfer means. This is found in all of claim 4, but not disclosed nor suggested by the prior art of record.

The primary reason for allowance of claims 5, 7-10, 14/5, 15/5, 14/7, 15/7, 14/8, 15/8, 14/9, 15/9, 14/10, and 15/10 is the inclusion of a first sheet transport guide that is disposed with a tilt with respect to a horizontal direction or vertical direction; and a downstream-side end portion of the first sheet transport guide that is positioned in

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substantially the center between the transfer means and the fixing means; the second sheet transport guide is disposed with a tilt with respect to the horizontal direction or the vertical direction; and a gap is provided to form a spacing sufficient to permit curves of the sheet to be formed between a downstream-side end portion of the first sheet transport guide and an upstream-side end portion of the second sheet transport guide. This is found in all of claims 5, 7-10, 14/5, 15/5, 14/7, 15/7, 14/8, 15/8, 14/9, 15/9, 14/10, and 15/10.

The primary reason for allowance of claims 11-13, 14/11, 15/11, 14/12, 15/12, 14/13, and 15/13 is the inclusion of both an output direction of the sheet to be output from the transfer means and a tilt direction in a sheet transport direction of the first sheet transport guide are set downwardly from a horizontal direction; both an entering direction of the sheet into the fixing means and a tilt direction in a sheet transport direction of the second sheet transport guide are set upwardly from the horizontal direction, and a rear-end portion of the first sheet transport guide is positioned in substantially the center between the transfer means and the fixing means and is positioned upwardly from a front-end portion of the second sheet transport guide, forming a spacing sufficient to permit curves of the sheet to be formed. This is found in all of claims 11-13, 14/11, 15/11, 14/12, 15/12, 14/13, and 15/13, but not disclosed nor suggested by the prior art of record.

The primary reason for allowance of claim 16 is the inclusion of a first sheet transport guide and a second sheet transport guide sequentially arranged from an upstream side of a transport direction of the sheet along a transport path of the sheet

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between the transfer means and the fixing means; the first sheet transport guide is disposed with a tilt with respect to a horizontal direction or a vertical direction; the second sheet transport guide is disposed with a tilt with respect to the horizontal direction or the vertical direction; the guide surface of the second sheet transport guide comprises a flat face extending in the horizontal direction or the vertical direction in the upstream side end portion and a sloped face containing from the flat face, and a gap is provided to form spacing sufficient to permit curves of the sheet to be formed between a downstream side end portion of the first sheet transport guide and an upstream side end portion of the second sheet transport guide. This is found in all of claim 16, but not disclosed nor suggested by the prior art of record.

The primary reason for allowance of claim 17 is the inclusion of a first sheet transport guide and a second sheet transport guide sequentially arranged from an upstream side of a transport direction of the sheet along a transport path of the sheet between the transfer means and the fixing means; the first sheet transport guide is disposed with a tilt with respect to a horizontal direction or a vertical direction; the second sheet transport guide is disposed with a tilt with respect to the horizontal direction or the vertical direction; a tilt angle in the sheet transport direction of the first sheet transport guide is set smaller than an angle of outputting the sheet that is output from the transfer means, and a gap is provided to form a spacing sufficient to permit curves of the sheet to be formed between a downstream side end portion of the first sheet transport guide and an upstream side end portion of the second sheet transport


guide. This is found in all of claim 17, but not disclosed nor suggested by the prior art of record.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Susan S. Lee whose telephone number is 571-272-2137. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon. - Fri., 10:30-8:00, Second Monday Off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Art Grimley can be reached on 571-272-2136 or 571-272-2800 (Ext. 52). The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

  
Susan S. Lee  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 2852

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